

TOP SECRET

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Approved For Release 2001/11/23 : CIA-RDP80T00294A000300110019-0

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UPI-96

(ARMS)

DATE: 9 Aug

ITEM: NO. 17

REF: NO.

WASHINGTON--THE WHITE HOUSE ASKED THE SENATE TODAY TO APPROVE THE U.S.-SOVIET AGREEMENT LIMITING OFFENSIVE NUCLEAR WEAPONS BEFORE IT RECESSES NEXT WEEK FOR THE REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTION. PRESS SECRETARY RONALD ZIEGLER SAID THE PRESIDENT SUPPORTED THE CONTROVERSIAL AMENDMENT TO THE AGREEMENT OFFERED BY SEN. HENRY M. JACKSON, D-WASH., BUT DID NOT SUPPORT CERTAIN "ELABORATIONS" OF IT BY JACKSON AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE SENATE IN THE CURRENT DEBATE.

ZIEGLER'S REMARKS APPEARED TO BE AN EFFORT TO CLARIFY THE ADMINISTRATION'S POSITION ON THE AMENDMENT AND HEAD OFF ANY DELAY IN SENATE ACTION. THE WHITE HOUSE ALSO WAS ANXIOUS TO PUBLICLY REGIETER OBJECTIONS TO ANY SENATE INTERPRETATIONS THAT MIGHT INHIBIT THE FREEDOM OF THE AMERICAN NEGOTIATORS WHEN THE SECOND PHASE OF THE TALKS BEGINS IN OCTOBER.

THE SENATE MUST APPROVE THE INTERIM FIVE-YEAR AGREEMENT, SIGNED BY NIXON DURING HIS MAY SUMMIT MEETING IN MOSCOW, BEFORE FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS CAN GET UNDER WAY.

ZIEGLER SAID THE WHITE HOUSE VIEW IS THAT JACKSON'S AMENDMENT FULLY COMPLIES WITH THE U.S.-SOVIET UNDERSTANDING ON TEMPORARILY LIMITING OFFENSIVE NUCLEAR ARMS. HE SAID THE WORDING OF JACKSON'S AMENDMENT WAS WORKED OUT DURING THE WEEKEND BY THE SENATOR IN CONSULTATION WITH WHITE HOUSE EXPERTS.

JACKSON'S AMENDMENT WAS SUBSTANTIALLY SOFTENED TO ELIMINATE SOME OBJECTIONABLE FEATURES WHICH, IN THE VIEW OF SOME SENATORS, WENT CONSIDERABLE FURTHER THAN THE AGREEMENT IN LIMITING SOVIET ACTION.

ZIEGLER SAID THE WHITE HOUSE REJECTED MANY OF THE INTERPRETATIONS PUT FORWARD IN THE SENATE DEBATE, INCLUDING JACKSON'S STATEMENT THAT CONSIDERATION OF EUROPEAN NUCLEAR FORCES FOR ACHIEVING EQUALITY IN INTERCONTINENTAL STRATEGIC WEAPONS SYSTEMS WOULD BE EXCLUDED IN FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS.

"WE ENDORSE THE JACKSON AMENDMENT BUT WE DO NOT ENDORSE THE SEPARATE ELABORATION OF THE AMENDMENT," ZIEGLER SAID.

HE ALSO DENIED THERE HAD BEEN ANY CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN THE WHITE HOUSE AND THE SOVIET EMBASSY ON THE AMENDMENT, SAYING THE SOVIET UNION ALREADY IS FULLY AWARE OF NIXON'S VIEWS.

8/9--GE156P